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SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

January 16, 2022

What Child Is This?

by Rev. Kim Wood, Conference Minister

As I contemplated writing this article, on the forefront of my mind was that its release would coincide with the weekend of The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday and the national holiday that is designated to commemorate it, Martin Luther King Jr. Day. As I sat down to begin, I did first what I generally do in preparation for placing pen to paper or keystrokes to computer: I prayed. As I pushed away the sounds of the world around me and listened for God's still-speaking voice, these words came into my heart, as clearly as if a heavenly choir were singing them:



*What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this the angels sing, is Christ, God's holy offering;
Haste, haste your praise to bring the babe, the child of Mary.*

Read the rest of this article by Rev. Wood [on our website](#). You may also request that a copy be sent via email by contacting us at info@secucc.org.

News from the Conference Office

Annual Information Review for Authorized Ministers

It is that time of year again, the Annual Information Review for Authorized Ministers! If you are an Authorized Minister, licensed, commissioned, or ordained, please take a few minutes and fill out the Information review. This helps us keep our database up to date and helps the Commission on Ministry and the Conference know how to support you better in your ministry. We have a couple of different ways you can submit your information, including an [online form](#) and a [fillable PDF](#) you can print and mail in or email back to the conference. The conference will also be sending out hard copies next week if you prefer that version. If you have any questions or problems with the form, please email hfosburgh@secucc.org.

Communities of Practice: A Program for Clergy

For Specialized Ministers and Local Church Pastors, these covenantal groups provide support and accountability, while encouraging good habits and professional growth. Small groups (5-6) led by a trained facilitator provide a place to share resources, experiences, and encouragement in a confidential setting.

Whether you are new to ministry, new to the UCC, or have years of experience, these groups are for you! The testimonies of those involved in Communities of Practice continue to praise the impact that groups have had on the personal and professional life of ministers. "Inspirational sessions with Worship, Prayer and Fellowship... this is a time we 'unpack our baggage' of the clutter, as we invite Holy Spirit to fill the sacred space." *COP participant Dorinda Broadnax.*

For more information about Communities of Practice, see this [article on our website](#) or contact Cindy Bovee-Kemper at COPfacilitator@secucc.org with questions or to sign up.

Clergy Zoom Connections for January

- **An Hour of Conversations and Prayer**
Tuesday, January 18, 25 - 11:00 a.m. Eastern (10:00 a.m. Central); Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/479440102>
- **Live Harp Meditations for Ministers**
Thursday, January 20 - 12:00 p.m. Eastern (11:00 Central)
20 minutes of meditation with Celtic harp. Silent prayer and reflection following if desired, facilitated by Rev. Jean Norton. (For questions or

to sign up for individual Therapeutic Harp Sessions, contact Jean at HeartSongJean@gmail.com.)

Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/96976838422>

- **Especially for Specialized Ministers**

Tuesday, January 25, 2021 - 9:30 a.m. Eastern (8:30 a.m. Central)

Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/354744689>



Prayer List

We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers, congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2022. We encourage you to include these prayer requests in your local church newsletter, share them with your prayer circle, and include them in your own prayers.

Week of January 16

- Shalom Spiritual Center UCC, Snellville, GA
- Marvin Albright
- Larry Evans
- Michael Malcom
- Linda Smith
- Tavye Morgan

Week of January 23

- Pilgrim Congregational UCC; Chattanooga, Tennessee
- Joyce Acree
- Paul Eknes Tucker
- J R Finney II
- Kirk Lyman Barner

- Townley McGiffert Jr.

Week of January 30

- Safe Harbor Family Church UCC; Clinton, Mississippi
- Dwight Andrews
- Robin Lee Fitch
- Gail McGill
- Jodi Yarini
- John R. Pearson

Churches in Transition

First Congregational, Montgomery AL; First Congregational, Savannah GA; Trinity Congregational, Athens AL; Rush Memorial, Atlanta GA; Holy Trinity Community Church, Nashville TN; First United Church, Belvidere TN; Pleasant Hill Community Church, Pleasant Hill TN; Peace Congregational, Clemson SC; Deer Lodge Congregational Church, Deer Lodge TN

News from the Wider Church



Cultivating Generous Congregations

The Cultivating Generous Congregations Seminar for pastors and lay leaders offers an opportunity to explore faithful, practical, and tested ways to promoting generosity in our congregations. The seminar draws on current research, seeks guidance from the wisdom of scripture, and discusses the best practices in church-based fundraising. Class sessions held on six Thursdays between Feb. 24 – May 12 from 7:00 – 8:30pm Eastern Time. Between class sessions, the instructors provide materials to

help you analyze the culture of your own congregation and learn how to create change. Register today: The CGC Seminar is \$300 for a team of two leaders. Register here by February 10, 2022: <https://cvent.me/qvwRM3>.



UCC Debuts "Willing to Respond" Online Resource

The UCC has an exciting new online resource to share with you to help local congregations prepare for and respond to disasters! [Willing to Respond](#) is designed to link a network of congregations who have expressed a desire to be ready for disasters—both to protect themselves and their members *and* to help their neighbors in a time of need.

Through an online tool and connection to denominational, ecumenical, and other disaster response organizations, **Willing to Respond** provides congregations with practical tools, training, and relationships. Please join them for a brief introduction to this resource! February 10, 2022 from 1:00-1:30pm Eastern. [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Flood Disaster Volunteer Opportunities in Nashville

Inspiritus is currently seeking individuals and churches to volunteer for the continued disaster recovery efforts in and around Nashville. To volunteer, [follow this link](#) for more information. If individuals are interested in being trained as a Disaster Volunteer Leader, [follow this link](#) to sign up for training opportunities.

Trending HR Considerations for Ministries

The new year presents emerging HR issues for ministries in 2022. Churches are learning how to pivot and adapt to managing risk during COVID-19 vaccine mandates, discipline and terminations, disability leave management, and updating policies and procedures to account for new changes in the law. Termination of ministry in the call agreement template is also proving to be challenging for some pastors. Join the Insurance Board on January 28th at 2:00 p.m. EST as Conference Minister Rev. David J. Ackerman and Attorney Dean A. Rocco discuss HR issues and offer legal considerations for your ministry. [REGISTER](#)

News from our Local Congregations

November 2022 Mission Trip to Back Bay Mission

If you want to know more about a potential work camp/adult mission trip to Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi, scheduled for Nov 13-19, 2022, there will be an information session on January 25, 2022, Tuesday from 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm at Pleasant Hill Community Church UCC in Tennessee. All are invited to learn how Back Bay Mission offers an outstanding mission trip program with excellent accommodations and how to help with the client choice food bank, serve meals at a community kitchen, rehabilitate Biloxi area housing and offer day services to the unsheltered. The cost is \$250 per person. For more details, please contact Mary Ruth at marybillruth@gmail.com.

Trainings and Conferences



Healthy Boundary Training for 2022

Healthy Boundary Training will be offered through Zoom again this year. The following courses will be offered in partnership with the Disciples of Christ Georgia Region.

- March 25-26 - **Healthy Boundaries 101: Fundamentals** [REGISTER](#)
- Sept. 16-17 - **Healthy Boundaries 201: Beyond Basics and Into the Internet** (Pre-req Healthy Boundaries 101) [REGISTER](#)

An additional course of Healthy Boundaries 301 is in final development and will be offered in May.

These trainings are offered Fridays from 1:45pm - 5:15pm, and Saturdays from 8:45am-12:15 pm. You must attend both sessions in order for the training to count toward Authorization Requirements for Ordained, Licensed, and Commissioned Ministers. The Fee is \$75.

The Commission on Ministry will also be offering a Healthy Boundaries Course for Retired ministers later in the year.

A reminder that in order to maintain ministerial standing in the Southeast Conference of the UCC, an Authorized Minister must complete an approved Healthy Boundaries Course once every four years. Both Healthy Boundaries 101 and 201 meet this requirement as does Healthy Boundaries for Retired Clergy unless a minister holds Exempt Status. If you have questions about these trainings, when you need training again, or Exempt Status, please email BATraining@secucc.org.



Sharing the Love – An Online Faith Formation Conference

February 25 26, 2022

Are you interested in gaining skills and new ideas for your faith formation (Christian education) activities at your church? Here is a great opportunity! You are welcome to join with people from the Heartland Conference UCC (Ohio) for two days of online Faith Formation workshops and conversation. You can find out more information and register here:

<https://heartlanducc.org/faith-formation-network/>. The cost of the two-day conference is \$30. It is all online.

Racial Justice Links

- Storytelling for Racial Justice: January 19 - <https://www.ucc.org/event/storytelling-and-racial-justice/>
- Vibrant Re-entry and Voter's Rights (Thursdays for the Soul): January 27 - <https://www.ucc.org/event/vibrant-re-entry-and-voters-rights-desmond-meade/>
- United Black Christians Celebration of Black History Month (Thursdays for the Soul): February 3 - <https://www.ucc.org/event/united-black-christians-celebration-of-black-history-month/>
- Becoming Abolitionists: <https://www.ucc.org/event/becoming-abolitionists/>
- The United Church of Christ Rural Church Coalition UCC Rural Voices of Worship and Praise (Thursdays for the Soul): February 17 - <https://www.ucc.org/event/ucc-rural-voices-of-worship-and-praise/>
- [Last Parent of a Child Killed in 1963 Church Bombing Dies](#) (US News and World Report)

- [Where Is the Forgiveness and Grace in Cancel Culture?](#) (NY Times)

Conference Calendar

January 18 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm EST

[Clergy Conversations via Zoom](#)

January 20 @ 12:00 pm - 12:30 pm EST

[Live Harp Meditations for Ministers](#)

January 24 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm EST

[Re-Opening of Churches – Conversation for all Church Leaders](#)

January 25 @ 9:30 am - 11:00 am EST

[Zoom Conversation for Specialized Ministers](#)

January 25 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm EST

[Clergy Conversations via Zoom](#)

View the **full calendar** of events online: <https://www.secucc.org/events/>

Contact Us

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